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Rep. John Aguilera
Rep. Ralph Ayres
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Rep. Don Lehe
Sen. Sue Landske, Vice-Chairman
Sen. Marvin Riegsecker
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Sen. Nancy Dembowski
Sen. Rose Antich
Sen. Earline Rogers



NORTHWEST INDIANA TRANSPORTATION STUDY COMMISSION

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Authority: P.L. 140-2001

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: August 25, 2003
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: Northwestern Indiana Regional
Planning Commission 6100
Southport Road,
Meeting City: Portage, Indiana
Meeting Number: 1

Members Present: Rep. Duane Cheney, Chairperson; Rep. John Aguilera; Rep. Mary Kay Budak; Sen. Joseph Zakas; Sen. Nancy Dembowski; Sen. Rose Antich-Carr; Sen. Earline Rogers.

Members Absent: Rep. Charlie Brown; Rep. Ralph Ayres; Rep. Don Lehe; Sen. Sue Landske, Vice-Chairman; Sen. Marvin Riegsecker.

Rep. Cheney called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

The first topic considered by the Commission was the pending construction on the Borman Expressway. Kathy Noland, Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), provided a brief overview of the nature of work to be done and introduced Greg Kicinski to discuss the

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

project in more detail. Mr. Kicinski explained that the work will begin in the spring of 2004 and continue through much of 2008. INDOT's summary of Mr. Kicinski's remarks is Exhibit A.

Following a brief recess to review aerial photographs and maps of the length of the project, Mr. Kicinski and Allen R. Egilmez, United Consulting Engineers & Architects, answered questions from the Commission relating to the project. Mr. Egilmez stated that the project was designed to meet traffic demand for a period of twenty years with the caveat that the designers could not identify the amount of traffic currently avoiding the expressway because of congestion that might be induced to utilize the expressway following the completion of the project.

The second topic considered by the Commission was the Indiana Toll Road's planned implementation of electronic toll collection. Mike Puro, director of the toll road, described the EZ Pass system that Indiana will join within the next eighteen months.

According to Mr. Puro, the benefits that will be realized by the implementation of electronic toll collection include increased motorist convenience, reduced backups at toll plazas, ozone reduction, increased trucking convenience, and truck noise reduction.

Mr. Puro explained that while tolling agencies in seven other states² utilize the EZ Pass system, Illinois remains outside the system. Mr. Puro said that the toll road is investigating the possibility of entering a reciprocal agreement with Illinois and also said that Illinois might yet join the EZ Pass system.

Mr. Puro also distributed a list of the pending construction projects along the toll road (Exhibit C).

Following Mr. Puro's presentation, Rep. Cheney opened the floor to a discussion of the Commission's work program for the remainder of the interim. Todd Etzler, representing the Regional Chamber Initiative, described the Initiative's membership and policy goals. James Ranfranz, Executive Director of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), requested an opportunity to update the Commission on NIRPC's transportation planning.

After setting the second meeting for September 9 at 3:00 p.m., Rep. Cheney adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

²See Exhibit B for a complete listing.